

## Testimony on SFY 26/27 Operating Budget

### Senate Medicaid Committee

Chairman Romanchuk, Vice-Chair Huffman, Ranking Member Liston, and esteemed committee members,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today.

My name is Dennis Grant, and I am the CEO of United Rehabilitation Services (URS). URS is in Dayton, Ohio and serve individuals with disabilities from Montgomery, Greene, Clark and Miami Counties. We provide a broad array of services including Adult Day Services, Employment Services administered by the Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD) and Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD). In addition, we have the only Childcare Center in Ohio for children with disabilities where we have a staff of nurses and OT, PT and Speech therapists onsite to meeting the needs of even medically fragile children. Our team of 90 employees are believe in our mission and the critical services to delivered to over 300 children and adults with acquired and developmental disabilities each day.

Please accept my most sincere thanks for the tremendous investment made in disability services in the last state biennium budget. The increased funding helped us recover from the pandemic and extreme workforce shortages. Thanks to your support, we have been able to:

- Reduce turnover from 36% to 25%, stabilizing our workforce and improving our continuity of care.
- Expand services to individuals we previously had to turn away due to staffing shortages.
- Implement quality measures, such as [specific program, staff training, technology improvement, etc.].
- Increase wages, with our current average Direct Support Professional (DSP) wage at \$19.18 per hour.

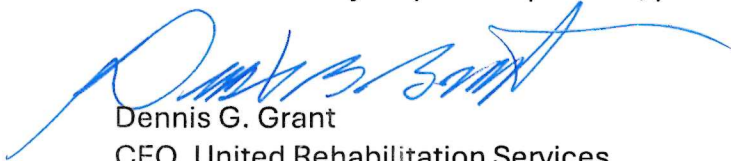
We also appreciate Governor DeWine and Director Hauck for honoring the commitment made in the last General Assembly by using General Revenue Funds (GRF) to maintain the rate increases that were funded in part with ARPA dollars. This investment provides much-needed stability for providers and the people they serve. However, the budget does not include any additional funding to further boost direct support professional wages, despite the continued workforce crisis and rising costs. The last rate increase took effect in July 2024, and without action from this body, providers face a nearly four-year gap in rate adjustments—putting us right back in the crisis we just emerged from.

To ensure Ohioans with disabilities and their families have access to the care they need, **we urge the General Assembly to:**

- 1. Maintain the Governor's investment** in ICFs, Multi-System Youth, and Technology First initiatives.
- 2. Include a rate increase for waiver providers** to keep up with inflation and workforce demands.
- 3. Establish a mechanism for ongoing increases** to prevent future funding crises.

Investing in these services is not just about providers—it's about ensuring Ohioans with disabilities receive the care and support they need to live full, independent lives in their communities. We look forward to working with you to build on the progress you've made and keep Ohio moving forward.

Thank you again for the opportunity and privilege to bring my concerns before you and if I can ever be of any help in this process, please let me know.



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